

Executive Service and is a recipient of GSA's Meritorious Service Award. David also served as acting regional administrator for GSA's Great Lakes Region from January 2009 until January 2011.

In a sense, David is the landlord for my State offices in Chicago and Carbondale. In that capacity, I saw firsthand David's commitment to the Federal Government and wise use of taxpayer money. Last year, my Chicago office in the Kluczynski Federal Building was in need of repair and reconfiguration. David and his team completed what would normally be a year-long project in just 4 months, and stayed within budget. In addition to meeting the operational needs of my Chicago staff so that they can best serve the people of Illinois, the renovation also produced considerable cost- and energy-savings.

As David's storied career in public service comes to a close, I rise to thank him for his hard work on behalf of the American people, and in particular the people of Illinois. David is an exemplary civil servant, and while his retirement is well-deserved, his service to the Federal Government will be missed.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

LANCE CORPORAL SEAN MICHAEL NICHOLAS
O'CONNOR

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today to honor and express our Nation's deepest thanks to a brave young man and his family. On Monday, I received word that LCpl Sean M.N. O'Connor of Douglas, WY, had fallen on June 12, 2011, in the line of duty in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Lance Corporal O'Connor was killed while supporting combat operations in Helmand Province in southern Afghanistan.

Lance Corporal O'Connor was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 8, II Marine Expeditionary Force FWD, 1st Marine Division, out of Camp Pendleton, CA. Sean's roots in the Marine Corps run deep. He was born at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton. Like his father, Lance Corporal O'Connor joined the U.S. Marine Corps in 2007 soon after graduating from Douglas High School. Sean was an avid reader, swimmer and shooter. He will be remembered as a fun loving son and friend who could always be counted on to lend a hand to those in need.

It is because of individuals like Sean O'Connor that all Americans are able to live our daily lives as free people. They put their very lives on the line every day, and because of their bravery and their families, our Nation remains free and strong. Freedom is not free. It carries a very high price. And that price has been paid over and over by many generations of men and women who answered the call to arms and willingly bear the burdens of defending our Nation. They deserve our deepest respect and gratitude.

The motto of the U.S. Marine Corps is "Semper Fidelis." It means "Always Faithful." LCpl Sean O'Connor lived up to these words with great honor. He made the ultimate sacrifice in the name of freedom for you and I to enjoy. He gave his life, that last full measure of devotion, for you, me, and every single American. Today we thank Lance Corporal O'Connor for serving and defending our country. He was always faithful to our country and its citizens, and to his fellow marines.

Lance Corporal O'Connor is survived by his parents Daniel and Dee O'Connor and his Aunt Sarah O'Connor. He is also survived by his brothers and sisters in arms of the U.S. Marine Corps. We say goodbye to a son, friend, neighbor, and a marine. The United States of America pays its deepest respect to LCpl Sean O'Connor for his sacrifice, so that we may remain free. Sean was the embodiment of honor, courage and commitment. All of Wyoming, and indeed the entire Nation, is proud of him. May God bless him and his family. Lance Corporal O'Connor, Semper Fi.

AMERICA INVENTS ACT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I was pleased that the Chamber of Commerce today wrote to Members of the House of Representatives in support of the America Invents Act. The Senate-passed companion legislation was approved in March in a 95-5 vote. This bill will create jobs and grow the economy without adding a penny to the deficit. Today's announcement by the Chamber of Commerce is a strong indication of a growing consensus that this legislation is what America needs to win the future through innovation. I applaud the work that Chairman SMITH, Mr. WATT, and others have done to move the legislation forward in the House, and I encourage the full House to act swiftly.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a full copy of the Chamber's letter.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
Washington, DC, June 14, 2011.

To the Members of the U.S. House of Representatives:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation representing the interests of more than three million businesses and organizations of every size, sector, and region, supports H.R. 1249, the "America Invents Act," which would encourage innovation and bolster the U.S. economy. The Chamber believes this legislation is crucial for American economic growth, jobs, and the future of U.S. competitiveness.

A key component of H.R. 1249 is section 22, which would ensure that fees collected by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) fund the office and its administration of the patent system. PTO faces significant challenges, including a massive backlog of pending applications, and this backlog is stifling domestic innovators. The fees that PTO col-

lects to review and approve patent applications are supposed to be dedicated to PTO operation. However, fee diversion by Congress has hampered PTO's efforts to hire and retain a sufficient number of qualified examiners and implement technological improvements necessary to ensure expeditious issuance of high quality patents. Providing PTO with full access to the user fees it collects is an important first step toward reducing the current backlog of 1.2 million applications waiting for a final determination and pendency time of 3 years, as well as to improve patent quality.

In addition, the legislation would help ensure that the U.S. remains at the forefront of innovation by enhancing the PTO process and ensuring that all inventors secure the exclusive right to their inventions and discoveries. The bill shifts the U.S. to a first-inventor-to-file system that we believe is both constitutional and wise, ending expensive interference proceedings. H.R. 1249 also contains important legal reforms that would help reduce unnecessary litigation against American businesses and innovators. Among the bill's provisions, Section 16 would put an end to frivolous false patent marking cases, while still preserving the right of those who suffered actual harm to bring actions. Section 5 would create a prior user right for those who first commercially use inventions, protecting the rights of early inventors and giving manufacturers a powerful incentive to build new factories in the United States, while at the same time fully protecting universities. Section 19 also restricts joinder of defendants who have tenuous connections to the underlying disputes in patent infringement suits. Section 18 of H.R. 1249 provides for a tailored pilot program which would allow patent office experts to help the court review the validity of certain business method patents using the best available prior art as an alternative to costly litigation.

The Chamber strongly opposes any amendments to H.R. 1249 that would strike or weaken any of the important legal reform measures in this legislation, including those found in Sections 16, 5, 19 and 18. The Chamber supports H.R. 1249 and urges the House to expeditiously approve this necessary legislation.

Sincerely,

R. BRUCE JOSTEN,
Executive Vice President, Government Affairs.

REMEMBERING PRIVATE FIRST CLASS JOHN T. MARR

Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts. Mr. President, on this day in 1777, the Second Continental Congress adopted the flag of the United States. At that time, American colonists were just 2 years into their long and bloody struggle for independence and only a year earlier had declared independence from the British throne. Since that time, our flag has been carried into countless battles and has been proudly worn on the uniforms of millions of American servicemen and women.

I rise today to tell the story of one such American, US Army PFC John T. Marr of Dorchester, MA. Private Marr was mortally wounded in combat on a hill on the other side of the globe. The hill happened to be in Korea in 1953. It could have been so many other places where Americans fought and died: Bunker Hill in Boston, Cemetery Ridge at Gettysburg, the cliffs of Normandy, Kakazu Ridge on Okinawa, Hamburger